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Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health for the Year 1925.

TO THE NEWPORT (SALOP) RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.

Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen,—

I beg to present the Annual Report on the sanitary circumstances and administration and vital statistics of the district for the year ending December 31st, 1925. The memorandum of the Ministry of Health directs that a survey report should be prepared, dealing with: (a) The measure of progress made in the area during the preceding five years in the improvement of public health; (b) The extent and character of the changes made during that period in the public health services of the area; (c) Any further action of importance in the organisation and development of public health services contemplated by the Local Authority, or considered desirable by the Medical Officer of Health.

NATURAL AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE AREA.

Area Acres)	22,617
Population (Census 1921)	5,745
Population (estimated R.G., 1925)	5,789
Number of inhabited houses (1921)	1,284
Number of families or separate occupiers (1921)	1,298
Rateable value	£47,482
Sum represented by a penny rate	£157

The district is for the greater extent agricultural, but industrial in the Lilleshall parish on the southern borders. The northern part is on the Shropshire Plain, here formed of the Bunter beds of the New Red Sandstone, and is entirely agricultural. The southern and smaller part rises somewhat rapidly from the plain, reaching an elevation of 500 feet at the extreme border on the south, and comprises the apex of the extensive coalfield which has its base some miles to the south. This part lies upon the coal measure. The natural drainage is by various small streams from the south and east flowing towards the west and joining the River Tern outside the district. There are nine parishes, all agricultural except the large parish of Lilleshall, which is in part agricultural, but

also contains the industrial area of Donnington Wood, several collieries and some engineering works employing the majority of the workers in the area.

VITAL STATISTICS.

The births numbered 100, of which 55 were male infants and 45 female The birth-rate is 17.2 as compared with an average for the previous five years of 20.5, the rate for England and Wales for the year being 18.3 Four, equal to 4 per cent., were illegitimate.

There were sixty-three deaths during the year, giving a death-rate of 10.8, the average for the preceding five years being 13.0 and the rate for England and Wales for the year 12.2. The causes of death were influenza 2, encephalitis lethargica 1, tuberculosis of the respiratory system 3, other tuberculous diseases 1, cancer 3, cerebral hermorrhage 4, heart disease 7, arterio-sclerosis 2, bronchitis 7, pneumonia 6, other respiratory diseases 1, diarrhœa 1, diseases of pregnancy 1, congenital malformation and premature birth 5, suicide 1, other deaths from violence 3, and other defined diseases 15. The death-rate during the year was decidedly favourable, there being no outstanding causes of death except an increase in those from respiratory diseases associated with influenza. There was one death from infantile diarrhœa and one from encephalitis lethargica (sleepy sickness).

INFANTILE MORTALITY.

Eight deaths of infants under twelve months occurred during the year, and the resulting infantile mortality rate is 80. The average for the years 1920—1921 was 76, and the rate for England and Wales for the year 75. Of the four illegitimate infants born during the year three died within twelve months. It appears to me that an Infant Welfare Centre at Donnington Wood should do good work, if it could be established. The population are often housed under conditions that are very unfavourable to the healthy upbringing of the children. Fifty per cent. of the infant deaths belong to this parish.

The causes to which the infant deaths were due are:—Prematurity 3, and one each from the following conditions—Septic meningitis, marasmus, bronchitis, congenital heart disease, and congenital malformation.

GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES IN THE AREA.

HOSPITALS PROVIDED OR SUBSIDISED BY THE LOCAL AUTHORITY OR BY THE COUNTY COUNCIL.

1. Tuberculosis—(a) Shirlett Sanatorium, subsidised by County Council; (b) Orthopædic Hospital, subsidised by County Council; (c) Prees Heath Sanatorium, provided by County Council.
2. Maternity—Beds at Newport Nursing Home, subsidised by County Council
3. Children's—Nil.
4. Fever—An arrangement to receive cases from the district at Monkmoor made by the District Council.
5. Smallpox—Steeraway Hospital, provided by County Council.
6. Eye Hospital, Shrewsbury, subsidised by County Council.

Ambulance Facilities—(a) For infectious cases the County Ambulance is available; (b) For non-infectious and accident cases there is none locally.

CLINIC AND TREATMENT CENTRES.

Maternity and Child Welfare Centres.—There is not one in the district, but the Newport Urban Centre and Oakengates Centre are available, but too far away from most of the district to be really of service.

Day Nurseries.—None.

School Clinics.—None in the district.

Tuberculosis Dispensary.—None in the district; the Newport and Wellington are made use of. V.D. at Shrewsbury.

They are all provided by the County Council.

Public Health Officers of the Local Authority.—Mr. J. H. Ward combines the office of Sanitary Inspector with that of Surveyor. He holds the Certificate of the Sanitary Institute. A contribution is made under the Public Health Act to his salary, and also to that of the Medical Officer of Health.

PROFESSIONAL NURSING IN THE HOME.

(a) General: There are district nurses in most of the parishes to carry out general nursing in the home.

(b) For Infectious Diseases: The County Council provide a nurse in epidemics of Whooping Cough, Measles and Influenza, who visits cases absent from school. She also undertakes the nursing of Ophthalmia Neonatorum at home where they cannot be sent to the Eye Hospital.

Midwives.—The Local Authority do not employ or subsidise any midwife. There are three living in the district, and midwives from the Nurses' Home, Newport, also attend cases in some of the parishes.

Chemical Analysis.—The Medical Officer of Health examines water samples. Two were submitted during the year; both were satisfactory.

LEGISLATION IN FORCE.

The Council have not adopted any Acts and there are no building by-laws. The Council should, I think, consider the adoption of By-laws for New Buildings, in order to ensure that houses are erected which are free from sanitary defects in construction and on suitable foundations.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.

WATER.

Church Aston and Chetwynd Aston villages are supplied from Newport Urban District Wells; the majority of the houses are connected to the mains.

Lilleshall Village, together with Muxton, Donnington, and the industrial area of Donnington Wood, all in the Lilleshall parish, are supplied by works and mains purchased by the Council from the Duke of Sutherland in 1920. The works have been reorganised. Two new engines and pump and engine house erected and a new main 840 yards laid on Trench Road. Water is raised from the Bunter beds below Lilleshall Village on the north side to reservoirs on Lilleshall Hill, which hold 404,000 gallons. The site of the well is at a safe distance from occupied dwellings. Practically all the houses in the parish of Lilleshall within reach of the mains have either a supply laid on or are within reasonable distance of a standpipe. One farm and seven cottages were connected to the main during the year.

The water supplies at Edgmond, Tibberton and Woodcote are as previously reported.

Elsewhere in the district the supplies to individual houses and to a few small groups of houses are from pumps and wells. Five were reconstructed and improved during the year.

SEWERAGE AND DRAINAGE.

There has been no alteration in connection with the public sewers at Donnington Wood and Edgmond and no new connections were made. Drains were reconstructed at 15 houses.

In other villages where the house drains are connected to the road water drains or individual houses discharge slop water on to gardens, fields or into ditches, very few complaints of offensive accumulations are received, four only being dealt with in the year.

There are only about 50 water-closets in the district. There were 2 conversions of privies to pail closets in the year.

There is no system of public scavenging in use in the district, householders generally disposing of their refuse on the garden.

SANITARY INSPECTION OF THE AREA.

A statement of the number of premises visited, the defects and nuisances discovered, and the action taken with the results, has been supplied by Mr. Ward, and is appended to the report.

Two hundred and forty-nine houses were visited, and twenty-seven informal notices were served, and in twenty-six properties the work was carried out.

HOUSING.

I. General Housing Conditions in the Area:—In the agricultural portion there are many good class modern cottages, and the conditions are on the whole very fair throughout. In the industrial area of Donnington Wood there are a considerable number amongst those leased by the Lilleshall Company that are of very unsatisfactory design, small barrack houses, often very damp and lacking in all modern conveniences. It is generally agreed that it is not possible to make them reasonably fit for human habitation in all respects. No scheme is in contemplation at present to meet this condition: the majority of the miners are

said not to be in a position to meet the increase in rent that would be necessary. On the other hand it is obvious that the houses are a source of ill-health and deficient stamina in the occupants, and on these grounds I think a modified scheme should be got out for this area. Many of the tenants have expressed their willingness to pay an increased rent in order to be free from the constant ill-health that has been their experience in these houses.

II. Overcrowding :—About 50 per cent. of the Barrack Cottages are over-crowded, and many of them grossly so. This is bound to occur with only two medium sized bedrooms and a family getting beyond the school age.

III. Fitness of Houses :—The Lilleshall Company continue to improve the houses in the Donnington Wood area, although, owing to industrial disturbances, at a slower rate than formerly. Thirty-three houses were put in repair as a result of informal notices and twenty-six as a result of notices under the Public Health Acts.

HOUSING STATISTICS FOR THE YEAR 1925.

Number of new houses erected during the year :—

(a) Total 4
(b) With State assistance under Housing Acts :—
(1) By the Local Authority ... 0
(2) By other bodies or persons 4

1.—Unfit Dwelling-houses.

Inspections :—

(1) Total number of dwelling-houses inspected for housing defects ... 249
(2) Number of dwelling-houses inspected and recorded under the Housing (Inspection of District) Regulations, 1910 18
(3) Number of dwelling-houses found to be in a state so dangerous and injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation 0
(4) Number of dwelling-houses found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation 8

2.—Remedy of defects without service of Formal Notices.

Number of dwelling-houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their officers 33

3. Action Under Statutory Powers.

A. Proceedings under Section III. of

the Housing Act, 1925, nil.

B. Proceedings under the Public Health Acts.

(1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied 27

(2) Number of dwelling-houses in which defects were remedied after service of formal notices :—

(a) by owner 26

(b) by Local Authority in default of owner ... 0

C Proceedings under Sections 11, 14, and 15 of the Housing Act, 1925, nil

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

a. Milk Supply.

There is an adequate supply of wholesome milk throughout the district, and a large quantity is exported to the large towns, either directly or through one of the various companies that collect milk.

There are 36 cowkeepers and milk-sellers on the register, and 175 visits of inspection have been made.

Notices were required in regard to the structure of the floor, drainage and cleanliness. All the notices were compiled with.

The County Council take the samples of milk for examination and no complaint of tuberculous milk was received from any source.

No licenses were granted for the sale of milk under special designations, and no refusal or revocation of registration of retailers.

b. Meat.

The Surveyor has been appointed Meat Inspector. No meat was condemned during the year.

Slaughterhouses on the Register.

	1920.	Jan. 1925.	Dec. 1925.
Registered	3	3	3
Licensed	0	0	0
	3	3	3

PREVALENCE OF, AND CONTROL OVER INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

Infectious Disease Generally.

During the period since 1920 to 1924 thirty-one cases of Diphtheria were notified, with four deaths. There has been no serious epidemic and the type as a rule was fairly mild. Five cases which

originated in a person infected in Birmingham were very virulent, and resulted in two deaths. Bacteriological examination is made in all cases and makes the control of this disease most effective, so that epidemics rarely occur.

One hundred cases of Scarlet Fever were notified during the last five years. Four deaths occurred amongst them. A large majority of them are very mild, and this, I think, accounts for the difficulty in checking an outbreak. School attendance has had little responsibility for spreading the disease. The arrangements made by the Council with the Atcham Joint Hospital Board to take in cases from the district is of great benefit, and meets the needs of the district in ordinary times quite satisfactorily.

I am not aware that the Schick and Dick tests in Diphtheria and Scarlet Fever respectively have been made use of in the area

Antitoxin is provided by the Council, both for prophylactic and curative purposes.

There is no steam disinfector, formalin vapour and spray being used for disinfecting bedding and clothes.

NOTIFIABLE DISEASES DURING THE YEAR 1925.

Disease	Notified.	Admitted to Hospital.	Deaths.
Diphtheria ...	3	0	0
Scarlet Fever ...	10	0	0
Pneumonia ...	8	0	6
Puerperal Fever	1	0	0
Encephalitis Lethargica ...	1	0	1
	23	0	7

TUBERCULOSIS.

New Cases and Mortality during 1925.

New Cases.

Age Period	Pulmonary. M.	Pulmonary. F.	Non-Pulmonary. M.	Non-Pulmonary. F.
10	0	0	1	2
15	0	0	1	0
20	0	1	0	0
25	0	0	2	0
35	0	0	0	0
45	0	1	0	0
55	1	0	0	0
	1	2	4	2

Deaths.

Age Period.	Pulmonary.		Non-Pulmonary.	
	M.	F.	M.	F.
10	0	0	0	0
15	0	0	0	0
20	0	0	0	0
25	1	1	0	0
35	0	0	0	0
45	0	0	0	0
55	1	0	0	0
	2	1	0	0

Of the notified cases one pulmonary was admitted to Shirlett and three non-pulmonary were treated at the Orthopædic Hospital at Oswestry.

The following specimens were examined at the Bacteriological Laboratory, University of Birmingham: Throat swabs 52, Bac. Dip. present 7, absent 45; sputum 10, Tub. Bac. present 0, absent 10; Blood 1, Widal positive 0, negative 1.

I am, gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

ALFRED E. WHITE.

The following is an account furnished by the Sanitary Inspector of sanitary work for the year ending 31st December, 1925, in the Newport Rural Sanitary District:—

(a) Number of houses which have been inspected during the above period, either in connection with outbreaks of infectious disease, or in consequence of complaints or in the course of a systematic sanitary survey, 249; number of informal notices sent, 27; number of such notices complied with, 26; number of letters written, 78. Particulars of sanitary matters referred to in the above notices: (a) Houses to be disinfected after infectious disease, 1; (b) Deficient or objectionable water supply, 5; (c) New drains to be constructed or old drains to be amended, 26; (d) New closets to be provided or old ones to be amended in construction, 17; (e) Houses damp or dirty, or admitting rain, or weather, or otherwise in a bad sanitary condition, 11; (f) Offensive accumulations of all kinds, 4; (g) Animals so kept as to be a nuisance, nil; (h) Houses overcrowded, nil. Houses disinfected after infectious disease (other than phthisis), 9; houses disinfected in cases of phthisis, 3; privies converted to water

closets, nil; privies converted to earth closets, 2; plans for new houses passed, no by-laws; certificates issued for water supply to new houses, 1; houses connected to public water supply, 5; repairs to public pumps and wells, 1; new public wells, nil; private wells reconstructed or improved, 5; houses connected to public sewerage, nil; lengths of new sewers laid, nil; lengths of new water mains laid, nil; proceedings before magistrates, nil. Remarks: The Lilleshall Co. continue to improve their property in the industrial area, but a large portion is not worth repair. They have been repaired and repaired until they will repair no longer. They want replacing with new houses. There are many cases of overcrowding in the district.

Signed, JOHN H. WARD,
Sanitary Inspector.

Inspection of dairies, cowsheds and milkshops for the year ended 31st December, 1925, in the Newport Rural Sanitary District:—

Number of cowkeepers and milksellers on register, 36; number of premises—cowsheds, 29; dairies, nil; milkshops, nil; number of inspections, 175. Defects found (1) in cowsheds—(a) floor or cubic space, nil; (b) ventilation, nil; (c) lighting, nil; (d) structure of floor, 5; (e) drainage, 3; (f) cleanliness, 11; (2) in surroundings of cowsheds, nil; (3) in sanitary condition of drains, 3; (4) in sanitary condition of milkshops, nil; (5) in water supply, nil; number of notices—verbal and written, 58; number of these notices complied with, 58; number of defects found and not yet remedied, nil.

Signed, JOHN H. WARD,

Annual report of the Medical Officer of Health for the year 1925 for the Rural District of Newport on the administration of the Factory and Workshop Act, 1901, in connection with Factories, Workshops and Workplaces:—Factories (including factory laundries), 4; written notices, 1; prosecutions, nil. Workshops (including workshop laundries), 12; total inspections, 16. Defects found in factories, workshops and workplaces: Unsuitable or defective sanitary accommodation—found, 1; remedied, 1.

(Signature) ALFRED E. WHITE,
Medical Officer of Health.
June 16th, 1926.

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